

MOTION BY SUPERVISOR DON KNABE

December 13, 2005

Six months ago, based on the Chief Administrative Office's (CAO) analysis, the Board approved the concept of moving certain functions now in the Department of Health Services into a separate Department of Public Health.

Today, the Board of Supervisors (Board) is being asked to set into motion, a series of steps which will formalize the separation by next month and complete final implementation by March. For the reasons the CAO already stated, I continue to support the separation in concept, especially if it can be implemented with no increase in net County cost. But this is a major and complex organizational change involving thousands of employees, hundreds of millions of dollars and programs which protect the health of every man, woman and child in this County. Wisdom therefore requires that we take a little more time to assure, to use my words of six months ago, "...that the move is superbly planned and executed so that services are improved, not disrupted."

- M O R E -

MOTION

MOLINA	_____
BURKE	_____
YAROSLAVSKY	_____
KNABE	_____
ANTONOVICH	_____

The CAO plan before us today includes the elements the Board needs to proceed, with one major exception. The proposed Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the Directors of Health Services, Public Health, and Mental Health will not be available for review until January 19, 2006.

The MOU is not just important, it is essential. It is the MOU that will help insure that after the separation, the directors and management of Public Health, Health Services and Mental Health will work closely and constantly together to improve and integrate services. That was the main goal in 1972 when public and personal health were merged, this is why the Board should not proceed without the MOU having the benefit of thorough and thoughtful review and comment.

I believe that in addition to the affected departments, the County's Public Health Commission, Hospitals and Health Care Delivery Commission, Mental Health Commission and the public should have the opportunity to review and comment on the proposed MOU. In addition, the public should have an opportunity to formally review and comment on the separation plan, especially the MOU before the Board takes final action.

The goal is not simply to act quickly, it is to act correctly. Doing it this way will take a bit longer and require more work, but it is the right way.

- M O R E -

I, THEREFORE, MOVE that the Board of Supervisors:

- 1) Accept, for purposes of public review and comment, the planning documents submitted by the CAO to establish a separate Public Health Department;
- 2) Set no later than June 30, 2006 as the target date by which the final implementation step (Step 17 in the CAO's implementation timeline) will be completed;
- 3) Instruct the CAO to supplement the planning documents by January 19, 2006 with: a) a draft MOU between Departments of Health Services, Mental Health and the proposed Department of Public Health that which provides for ongoing efforts to improve joint service planning and delivery and resource sharing, and has been reviewed by the County Commissions mentioned above; b) recommendations on how to operationalize and manage the MOU so that demonstrable interdepartmental efficiencies and service improvements are regularly achieved; and c) a revised implementation timeline consistent with this motion;
- 4) Schedule public comment and discussion of the planned separation of Public Health from Health Services as a set item for February 7, 2006; and,
- 5) Continue the proposed ordinance changes (Items 59 and 60 on today's agenda) to that date.

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RE:e/gr